



Senate Bill 1198, An Act Implementing the Recommendations of the School Indoor Air Quality Working Group

Education Committee

March 15, 2023

The Associated Sheet Metal & Roofing Contractors of Connecticut (ASMRCC) is an association of commercial, industrial and residential sheet metal contractors employing the skilled craftsmen of Locals #40 and #38 of the Sheet Metal, Air, Rail, and Transportation Workers International Union and also Locals #9 and #12 of the United Union of Roofers, Waterproofers, and Allied Workers. ASMRCC seeks to provide services that will enhance members' businesses, markets and profitability in all sectors of the sheet metal, HVAC, and roofing industry in Connecticut and vicinity.

My name is Matthew Cole, and I am submitting this testimony on behalf of ASMRCC. I live in Hamden, Connecticut and am Principal/Field Operations Manager of Wing's Testing & Balancing Co., Inc. in Branford. I was appointed to and served on the School Indoor Air Quality Working Group as a representative of ASMRCC. I am a subject matter expert in HVAC and Indoor Air Quality and have assisted several towns and boards of education in specifying and executing the testing and adjustments of ventilation systems. I am the past chair of the ICB/TABB Technical Committee and hold a Connecticut limited sheet metal contractor (CT SM-1 6803) license, as well as numerous industry certifications, including IAQ, Testing and Balancing, Life Safety, and Commissioning.

ASMRCC is a member of the Coalition for Healthy Air in Schools, which supports Senate Bill 1198. **ASMRCC also supports Senate Bill 1198 and urges the committee to approve the bill.** The bill improves on Section 370 of public act 22-118 and will improve the learning environment for schoolchildren and the work environment for teachers and administrators.

Senate Bill 1198 requires the Department of Administrative Services to prescribe forms and establish an online portal for the collection of Ventilation Verification

reports. This step is crucial to the success of the School Indoor Air Quality mandates, as the forms and portal will ensure all jurisdictions are measuring the same parameters, and test data will be aggregated for research and benchmarking. Being able to look at results state-wide will help determine where the problems lie and help focus funding for remediation equitably.

Senate Bill 1198 modifies from tri-annual to annual the requirement for schools to perform an inspection using the Environmental Protection Agency's Indoor Air Quality *Tools for Schools* program. This cost effective, short annual walk-through helps ensure that the data collected by the five-year Ventilation Verification Assessment remains current and valid. **Annual** Tools for Schools inspections are widely endorsed by subject matter experts and are backed up by the science.

Senate Bill 1198 extends the deadline for initial Ventilation Verification reports to January 1, 2025. This important extension ensures that all jurisdictions will have access to trained and certified technicians and design professionals to perform the work. The bill also allows for waivers for equivalent inspections performed in a different format, or for inspections already scheduled to take place after the deadline. This language will help those districts that may have already completed the ventilation assessments before the online portal is active and before standardized forms are issued.

Senate Bill 1198 extends the charge of the working group until July 1, 2024. This is important as while the working group has made excellent progress to date, much work remains from its initial charge. School IAQ is a complicated, important topic that affects thousands of schoolchildren and teachers, and it is critical to get it right. Extending the working group's timeline ensures that its final report will be comprehensive, science-based, and equitable for all for whom their work impacts.

Trade union HVAC contractors are qualified, properly trained and ready and able to maintain and improve indoor environmental conditions in schools across the state, and to help return them to full capacity operation. This will enhance the learning environment for all schoolchildren and teachers.

For any technical questions concerning indoor air quality and testing, please contact Matthew Cole, CHC, LEED AP+ BD&C, Field Operations Manager for Wing's Testing and Balancing Co., Inc., 94 North Branford Road, Suite 1, Branford, CT 06405, (203) 481-4988, MCole@wingstesting.com. For any additional information or questions concerning ASMRCC, please contact Michael Thompson, Executive Director of ASMRCC, at (860) 413-9447.